
Parish Safeguarding Policy

In accordance with the Church of England Safeguarding Policy our church is committed to:

- Promoting a safer environment and culture.
- Safely recruiting and supporting all those with any responsibility related to children, young people and vulnerable adults within the church.
- Responding promptly to every safeguarding concern or allegation.
- Caring pastorally for victims/survivors of abuse and other affected persons.
- Caring pastorally for those who are the subject of concerns or allegations of abuse and other affected persons.
- Responding appropriately to those that may pose a present risk to others.

This policy sets out the main safeguarding points the PCC wants everyone to know. It's not the whole Church of England rule-book, and if anything here clashes with official safeguarding guidance, the Church of England guidance prevails.

If you have any questions, ask the Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) who will check with the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser if needed. Full guidance can be found here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/safeguarding>

1) Living out our safeguarding commitments

All Saints Little Shelford will:

- a) Create a safe and caring place for all.
- b) Have a named Parish Safeguarding Officer (PSO) to work with the incumbent and the PCC to implement policy and procedures.
- c) Safely recruit, train and support all those with any responsibility for children, young people and adults to have the confidence and skills to recognise and respond to abuse.
- d) Ensure that safeguarding training is refreshed at appropriate intervals for all relevant staff and volunteers.
- e) Ensure that there is appropriate insurance cover for all activities involving children and adults undertaken in the name of the parish.
- f) Display in church premises and on the church website the details of who to contact if there are safeguarding concerns or support needs.
- g) Take all safeguarding concerns seriously, responding promptly and having due regard¹ to the House of Bishops guidance².
- h) Report safeguarding concerns to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) and statutory agencies immediately where necessary, ensuring that concerns meeting the relevant thresholds are reported within 24 hours.
- i) Ensure safeguarding concerns or allegations are recorded and stored securely, following legal and best practice guidance. Access to safeguarding records will be limited to the PSO, the incumbent and individuals designated by the PCC to ensure confidentiality and appropriate oversight.
- j) Offer support to victims/survivors of abuse regardless of the type of abuse, when or where it occurred.

¹ "Due regard" means the House of Bishops guidance must be followed unless cogent reasons justify a departure, and then only after consulting both the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser and Registrar.

² In accordance with section 5 of the Safeguarding and Clergy Discipline Measure 2016, the annual report referred to in paragraph (1)(b) shall include a statement as to whether the council has complied with its duty to have due regard to the House of Bishops' guidance on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults.

- k) Care for and monitor any member of the church community who may pose a risk to children and adults whilst maintaining appropriate confidentiality and the safety of all parties.
- l) Ensure that health and safety policy, procedures and risk assessments are in place and that these are reviewed annually.
- m) Work in partnership with statutory agencies where appropriate to promote the safety and welfare of children and adults.
- n) Review the implementation of the Safeguarding Policy, Procedures and Practices at least annually.

2) PCC Responsibilities

- a) The PCC holds overall responsibility for safeguarding in relation to the mission and activities of ASLS and ensures that all safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented.
- b) The PCC will ensure that the PSO receives appropriate training and support to fulfil their role effectively.
- c) The PSO will attend a meeting of the PCC at least once per year to provide an update on safeguarding matters.
- d) At the Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM), the PCC will provide an annual report in relation to safeguarding, detailing key actions, concerns, and progress.
- e) The PSO is appointed for a term of three years, renewable once³.

3) Safer Recruitment & DBS Checks

The PCC will:

- a) Ensure that all individuals in positions of trust, including clergy, paid staff, and volunteers who work with children, young people, or vulnerable adults, have an enhanced DBS check where required.
- b) Delegate to the PSO the task of keeping an up-to-date register of every role at ASLS that records (i) whether a DBS check is required, (ii) the level of check needed, and (iii) the rationale for that decision. The register is indicative, not prescriptive: DBS-eligibility decisions must always be judged against the specific responsibilities of each role. The PCC retains oversight of the register and must approve any material changes.
- c) Follow the Safer Recruitment process outlined in national guidance.
- d) Ensure that recruitment policies are reviewed periodically to maintain safeguarding best practices.

4) Handling Allegations & Whistleblowing

- a) Concerns regarding church officers⁴ will be reported to the Diocesan Safeguarding Adviser (DSA) in line with House of Bishops guidance.
- b) Concerns will be reported as soon as is practicably possible and in any case within 24 hours of receiving a safeguarding concern or allegation.
- c) Any allegation concerning anyone who normally has access to safeguarding reports must bypass that individual and be reported to the DSA. This reporting process will be kept confidential from the subject of the allegation.
- d) Any serious safeguarding incidents will be reported to the appropriate statutory agencies and, if required, to the Charity Commission.
- e) A whistleblowing process will be in place to allow concerns about safeguarding failures to be reported safely.

³ The PSO's job description contains fuller detail.

⁴ A "church officer" is anyone appointed/elected by or on behalf of the Church to a post or role, whether they are ordained or lay, paid or unpaid. It therefore includes all volunteers to any and all roles.

- f) All safeguarding allegations must be reviewed by the PSO within 24 hours. If the concern may meet a statutory or serious incident reporting threshold, the PSO will consult the DSA immediately and follow the process set out in Section 5.
- g) Allegations that clearly fall below the Serious Incident threshold will be managed by the PSO under normal safeguarding procedures and reported to the full PCC in the PSO's next routine safeguarding update.
- h) The PCC recognises that there is some overlap of health and safety and safeguarding issues and expects the criteria for each to be properly, separately and proportionately applied.

5) Serious Incident decision-making

- a) When the PSO, after consultation with the DSA, considers that an allegation may meet the Charity Commission Serious Incident threshold, the PSO will immediately notify the Incumbent and a churchwarden, and if either cannot be contacted, the other churchwarden, or failing them any other PCC member. The PCC members will confer (in person, online or by e-mail) within 24 hours to decide – using the current House of Bishops and Charity Commission guidance – whether to file an SIR.
- b) If a Serious Incident Report is required, the PCC members present will nominate a single PCC member to submit the report promptly (the same or next working day) and will minute that decision.

6) Managing Those Who May Pose a Risk

- a) Where the PSO, in consultation with the DSA, identifies an individual who meets the Church of England e-Manual criteria for “a person who may present a safeguarding risk”, the PSO will draw up a Safeguarding Agreement (Church Safety Plan) proportionate to that risk, for the approval of the PCC.
- b) The agreement will include appropriate monitoring measures to ensure the safety of all members of the church.

7) Digital & Online Safeguarding

- a) Consideration will be given to safeguarding risks associated with online church activities, including social media interactions.
- b) Church leaders, staff, and volunteers engaging with young people online will be expected to adhere to appropriate digital safeguarding guidelines.
- c) Safeguarding risks associated with digital communication will be regularly reviewed.

8) External Mission Partners

- a) Where the PCC provides financial or other support to external mission partners, efforts will be made to encourage good safeguarding practices within those organisations.
- b) If safeguarding concerns arise regarding a partner organisation, the PCC will review its ongoing relationship with that organisation.

Each person who works within this church community and for whom a DBS report is required will agree to abide by this policy and the guidelines established by this church.

Policy approved by the PCC: 7th July 2025

Next policy review by the PCC: July 2026

Signed  Name Simon Scott (Incumbent or Churchwarden)